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ASSOCIATION OF ALUMNI
SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER

THE CRISIS

Nearly a month has elapsed since the Sir George Community was shattered by violence. Perhaps we may now attempt to reflect upon the issues surrounding this crisis in a more rational frame of mind.

The basic issue in this entire affair was the claim by several black students that Assistant Professor Perry Anderson allegedly discriminated against them. This claim and the subsequent charges have yet to be resolved. A man's career is at stake. The futures of the students who made these charges are at stake. The reputation of an entire University Community is at stake. Although these issues may never be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, Assistant Professor Anderson and the students have the right to realize justice. Moreover, because the nature of many of the issues is moral rather than legal, it may not be that any "legal" hearing will solve them categorically. If it is that the university is not now in a position to objectively consider all of the diverse implications in this affair, it has been suggested that an inquiry by persons not a part of the Sir George Community be undertaken as soon as possible.

This inquiry might be conducted by eminent Canadian residents who could properly represent the parties involved in this affair. Such an inquiry merits serious consideration.

The events that have occurred at Sir George are, we realize, part of a pattern of events that are taking place in universities throughout the world. Students claim the right to participate in all of the aspects of their education, faculty wish to preserve their necessary influence over the nature and direction of universities and administrations grope to ensure the university functions in the best interest of its community. If it is a fact that universities must rapidly develop all of the democratic means necessary to respond to these accelerating demands for change, then it is a fact that every member of the University Community has the responsibility to ensure that these changes occur with a minimum of friction. They must of necessity involve no threat of intimidation, no resort to violence. For to imply violence is to invite repression. These alternatives are anarchic; these alternatives are unacceptable. That sensitivity to the other person's situation is one of the ultimate criteria upon which change within a university must occur should by now be obvious. To be insensitive is to invite disaster, the consequences of which can no longer be borne.

There are many people today who are very bitter about Sir George students, the faculty, administration and

indeed, the entire university community. Among these people are members of the Alumni Association. If it follows that Sir George should no longer be supported because the university ran temporarily awry, then do we close down Sir George, Simon Fraser, Columbia and the Sorbonne? And with what do we replace them?

Sir George Williams University has served this community as well as any university has ever served any community. Among those to testify are 10,000 alumni who are now teachers, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, poets and playwrights. This university has been magnanimous in its efforts to provide the best possible education not only to those who were able to attend its day classes, but to the thousands who because of circumstances often beyond their control, could not afford the luxury of full-time day classes. For many years the faculty at Sir George literally subsidized education from their own pockets. The business community in this part of the country has for 30 years been subsidized by this university. We should not forget so quickly.

Many have not forgotten. The same day the university burned, Georgians called in their appeal for restoration and sent money to support their plea. Students instinct-

ively volunteered to clean up. Students will be blamed for these past events yet most students, black and white, took no part in the irrational events of violence. Before we allow misinterpretation to take root, let us seriously

reflect upon the events of the past and ask ourselves just how important Sir George is to us; if not to us anymore, then to our society and to the many young men and women who will one day want an education.

PRESIDENT STATES ASSOCIATION'S POSITION: CONTINUING NEED FOR SUPPORT

The chain of events that began in April, 1968, and led to the woeful actions of February 11th, 1969, are undoubtedly too complex to permit thorough narration here. These events did however draw comment from the Association's directors in correspondence to the University Community and in two Press Releases. It is appropriate to review these comments in appealing for sober reflection on our role as former students in what is at once a period of crisis, need and sadness at Sir George.

In correspondence on January 28th, 1969, directed to the University Community, the directors communicated their concern at the length of time it was taking to develop a process in which all affected parties would participate with mutual trust. They restated then the purpose of our Association as dedicated to the support of the University Community and indicated that the Association would be prepared to help, in whatever way it could, in resolving the conflict. In a News Release of February 10th, 1969, while condemning the actions of those who were then disrupting the functioning of the

university and calling upon them to cease their efforts in this regard, the Board of Directors urged the University Community to establish proper procedures for resolution of the conflict with minimum delay.

Commenting, in another News Release on the events of February 11th, the Board of Directors stated unequivocally that there can be no excuse for the actions of those involved in the destruction of University property. It reiterated its offer of assistance in developing just procedures, within the full limit of the law, that will deal with future issues that could lead to a reoccurrence of such events.

I appeal for your support to Sir George in its hour of crisis, need and sadness. I believe that, unhappy as you may be at recent events, you will find no essential conflict in a role which urges the development of easy channels of communication in our growing university; but renders prompt assistance in terms of time, talent and money when they are sorely needed.

ACTING PRINCIPAL CLARKE APPEALS FOR RESTORATION

Acting Principal Clarke, in a message to Alumni, has appealed for support to restore not only the physical building, but the university's climate and reputation. In this regard, the Principal believes "We must also seek to improve the quality of the relations of individuals and of groups of individuals within the university community. Our university government, which is a joint undertaking, must be as responsive as possible to different needs."

The Principal estimates that the damages in the Hall Building exceed \$2 million and although part of this cost will be covered by insurance, "We need," he stressed, "all the financial assistance we can obtain to meet the rest of the cost. And this need has arisen at a time of general financial stringency for the University."

Acting Principal Clarke concluded his message with the following appeal: "I am appealing to you for your support in dealing with all our problems of restoration — those that affect the reputation and atmosphere of the University, and those that derive from the need to rebuild. Your active goodwill and your financial assistance are both vital."

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EDITOR RESIGNS

We would like to express our gratitude to D'Arcy O'Connor for the excellent work he has performed as the Newsletter's Editor. Owing to his resignation last December we are accepting applications for this position. Please address applications to the Alumni Office, c/o Ron Moores Acting Editor.

A STATEMENT FROM CHANCELLOR FULTON

No one knows better than each of you that Sir George is probably the most cosmopolitan University in the country and the most free from any element of racial or other discrimination. We prided ourselves on our open door policy and it is, therefore, most unfortunate that we should have been selected for the recent demonstrations. I am confident we can overcome the present strong element of public censure and restore our position in the minds of the public and others who feel we have fallen from grace. I am satisfied the very large majority of our Administration, Faculty and Students are completely dedicated to the democratic way of life and to progressive education in our form of society.

A large responsibility is vested in every member of the Association of Alumni to restore, and continue to enhance the image and purpose of Sir George Williams University. I trust you will do your share.

YOUR DONATION MEANS A LOT RIGHT NOW

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

1435 Drummond St., Montreal 107, Quebec

My gift to Sir George of \$ will be given in payment(s) of \$

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Your donation is gratefully appreciated — Thank You.

PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR DONATION

TELATHON SCHEDULED

24, 25, 26 MARCH

The clarion call is out to former student leaders of years gone by at Sir George to take to the phones in the Hall Building from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on the nights above. They will talk about Sir George to their fellow alumni and urge them to give to S.G.W.U.

The spirited group who initiated this marathon talk session feel that they can in this way dramatize their support for our University and hope to raise her \$10,000 proving that there are others who feel like they do.

A call to 879-5897 or 879-5898 can let them know on which evening you propose to join them in their valiant efforts.
